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THE Unexplained

MYSTERIES OF MIND SPACE & TIME

Sex and alchemy

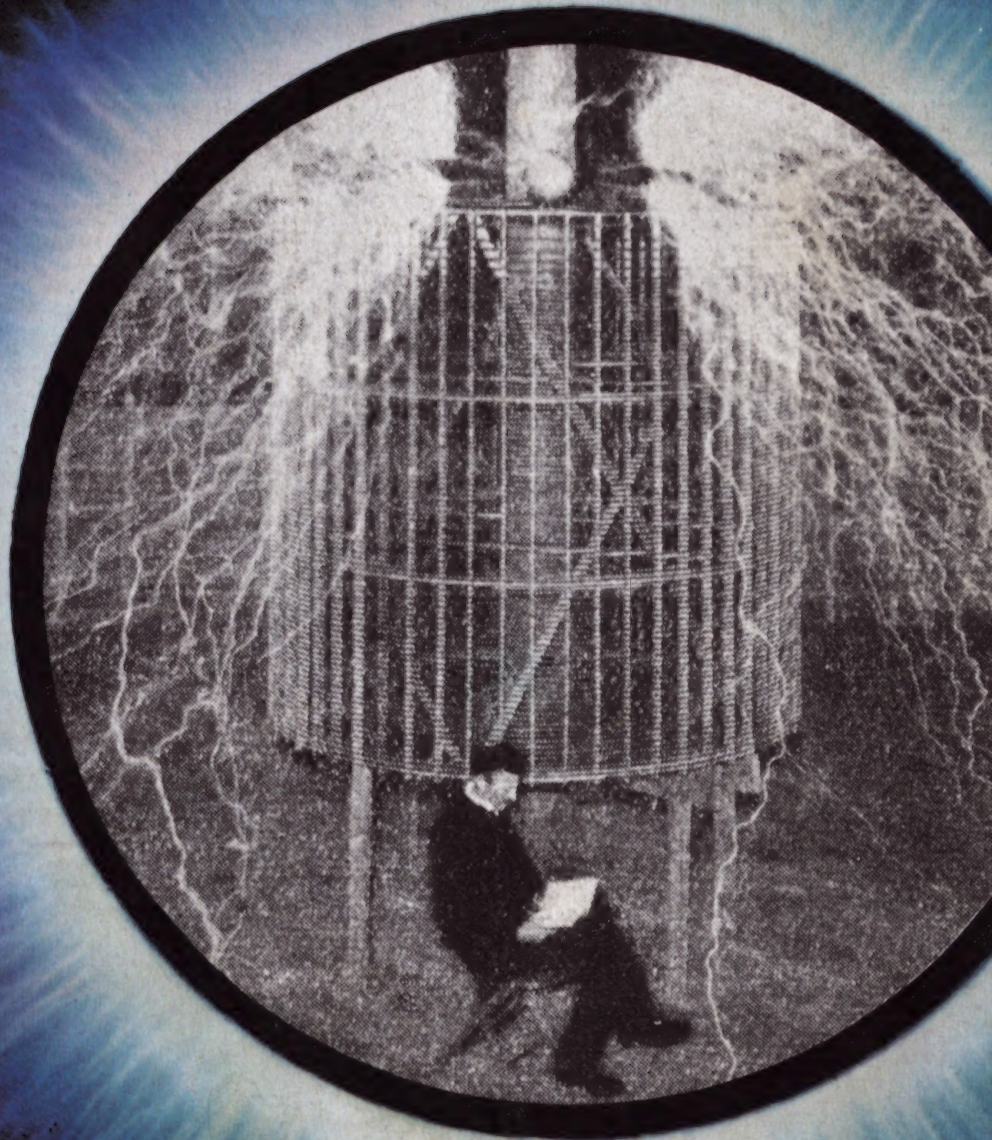
Tesla: unknown genius

Glastonbury scripts

End of the jinx ship

UFOs over Japan

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THE Unexplained

MYSTERIES OF MIND SPACE & TIME

Published weekly by Orbis Publishing Limited
Orbis House, 20/22 Bedfordbury, London WC2N 4BT

Volume 5 Issue 50

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Picture acknowledgements

Cover: Photri; Arnold Desser (inset); 981: UPI, New York; 982: Arnold Desser (t and c); artwork by Studio Briggs (b); 983: Arnold Desser (t); Peter Newark's Western Americana (b); Ann Ronan Picture Library (br); 984: Arnold Desser (t); 985: British Museum (t); Ann Ronan Picture Library (b); 986: Jean-Loup Charmet (t); Werner Forman Archive (c); British Museum (b); 987: The British Library (t); 988: Sven Gahlin (tr); 989: Janet & Colin Bord; Psychic News (inset); 990-991: artwork by Keith Harmer; 991: Aerofilms (b); 992: Janet & Colin Bord (b); 993: Janet & Colin Bord (t); 994: Atlantic Mutual Insurance Company; 995: Mary Evans Picture Library (b); 996: Boston University Library (t); Dennis Gifford (b); 997: Meteorological Office/ c) J.H. Golden; 998-1000: illustrations by Iain McCaig; back cover: John Beckett

In next week's issue

We investigate the tragic end of the 'boy without a past' in our concluding article on **Kaspar Hauser**. Another article in our occasional series on **ESP successes** describes the remarkable results of 'psychic healing' applied to animals and even plants. In **Alchemy** we explain how the ancient quest for the secret of transmuting base metals into gold continues in our own day. The fear of **Vampires** also continues – with deadly consequences, as the first of a new series reveals. Such 'supernatural' creatures are perhaps no more fantastic than animals that can 'see' heat, 'feel' magnetism and smell communications from their own kind. These extraordinary features of **Strange nature** are guiding scientists to the discovery of equally extraordinary powers in ourselves.

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For six months (26 issues) £15.00, for one year (52 issues) £30.00. Send your order and remittance to The Unexplained Subscriptions, Punch Subscription Services, Watling Street, Bletchley, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK2 2BW, being sure to state the number of the first issue required.

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Flash of inspiration

Nikola Tesla, neglected pioneer of electrical energy, tapped the elemental forces of the planet in his search for ways to transmit power without wires. NEIL POWELL relates the history of a prolific inventor whose work may yet revolutionise the modern world

DURING THE NIGHT of 7 January 1943, an 86-year-old man died alone in his room in the New Yorker Hotel in Manhattan. Before his body was removed to Campbell's Funeral Parlor at 81st Street and Madison Avenue, agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation entered his room, opened the small safe that he kept there, and took all the papers that it contained, on the grounds that they might contain details of an important secret weapon.

The man was Nikola Tesla, an electrical

Nikola Tesla, a brilliant inventor and a profound scientist, and one of the few people who have refused the offer of a Nobel prize. Among many other remarkable devices he invented the alternating current generator

engineer whose genius rivalled that of Edison. He has been strangely forgotten, except in the country of his birth, although his name lives on in the Tesla coil, an invention that exploits some of the more bizarre properties of electrical current discovered by Tesla. But this scarcely represents the scope of his wide-ranging scientific achievements.

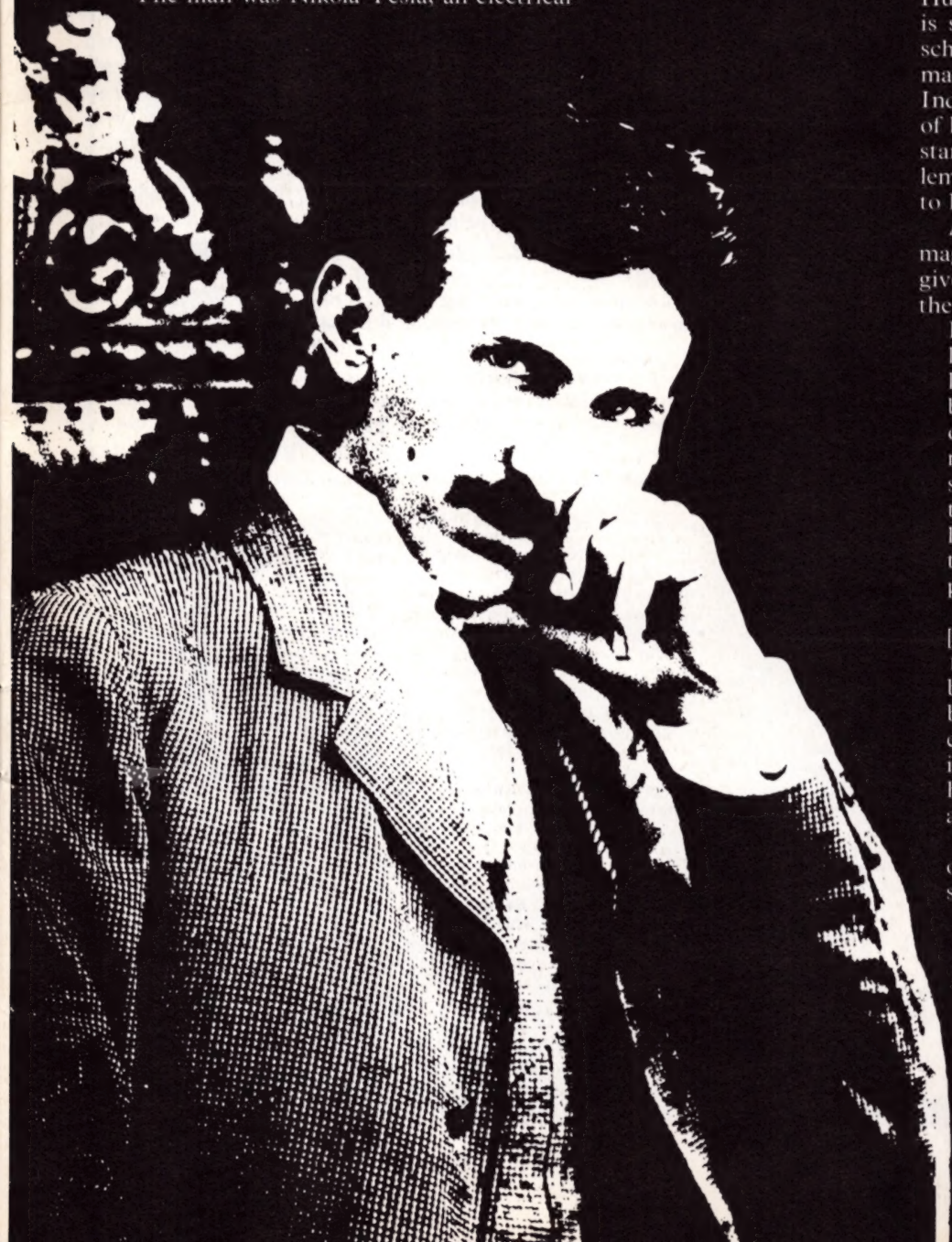
He was born at midnight on 9 July 1856, in Smiljan, at that time part of the Austro-Hungarian empire, but now in Yugoslavia. It is said that he was accused of cheating at school because he would give the answer to a mathematical question incredibly quickly. Indeed, from his earliest years until the end of his life, Tesla claimed that all his understanding of the complex engineering problems to which he devoted his attention came to him in flashes of intuition.

An interview published in the American magazine *The World* on 22 August 1894 gives us a striking picture of Nikola Tesla at the height of his powers:

He has eyes set very far back in his head. They are rather light. I asked him how he could have such light eyes and be a Slav. He told me that his eyes were once much darker, but that using his mind a great deal had made them many shades lighter. I have often heard it said that using the brain makes the eyes lighter in color. Tesla's confirmation of the theory through his personal experience is important.

He is very thin, is more than six feet [1.8 metres] tall, and weighs less than 140 pounds [64 kilograms]. He has very big hands. His thumbs are remarkably big, even for such big hands. They are extraordinarily big. The thumb is the intellectual part of the hand. The apes have very small thumbs. Study them and you will notice this.

Nikola Tesla has a head that spreads out at the top like a fan. His head is shaped like a wedge. His chin is pointed



as an ice-pick. His mouth is too small. His chin, though not weak, is not strong enough. His face cannot be studied and judged like the faces of other men, for he is not a worker in practical fields. He lives his life up in the top of his head, where ideas are born, and up there he has plenty of room. His hair is jet black and curly. He stoops – most men do when they have no peacock blood in them. He lives inside of himself. He takes a profound interest in his own work. He has that supply of self-love and self-confidence which usually goes with success. And he differs from most of the men who are written and talked about in the fact that he has something to tell.

Migration to America

And Tesla certainly had something to tell. He had arrived in New York in 1884, his capital four cents, and his baggage comprising some technical articles that he had written in Belgrade and Paris, a book of poems that he had composed, and some calculations that he had made for the design of a flying machine. But in his head he had all the details of the polyphase alternating current generator, which was to become the basis of the Niagara Falls hydroelectric power installation in 1895 and has since become the standard for industrial machinery. As Lord Kelvin, the distinguished British scientist, put it: 'Tesla has contributed more to electrical science than any man up to his time.'

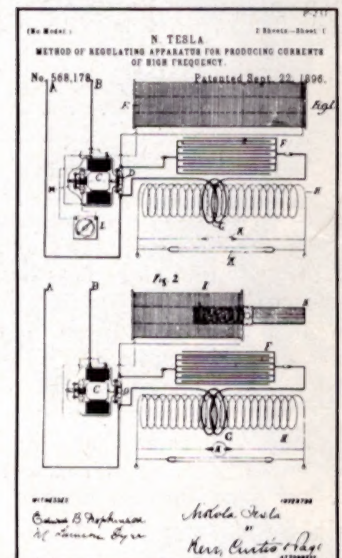
Soon after his arrival in New York, Tesla was employed by Edison, for whom he designed 24 types of dynamo. But the two men did not hit it off, and in April 1887 Tesla was set up in his own laboratory. Here he rapidly showed that his AC system was much superior to Edison's DC system, and in little



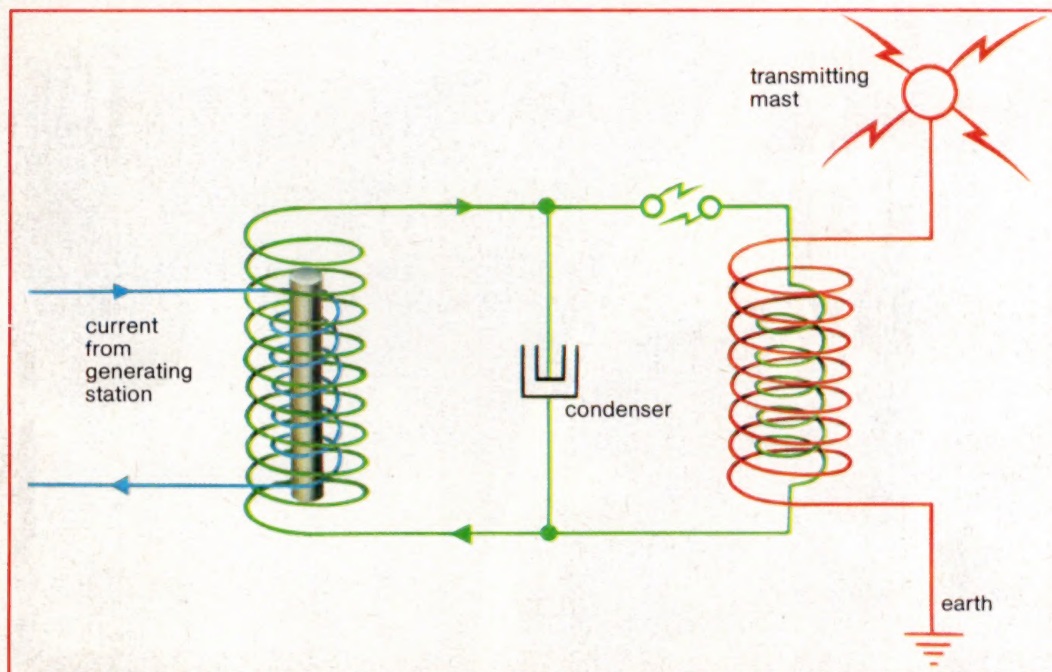
Left: Nikola Tesla in 1879, at the age of 23. Still a student, he had produced many speculative proposals for daring inventions, but had as yet no practical achievements to show

over a year he had been granted no less than 30 important patents.

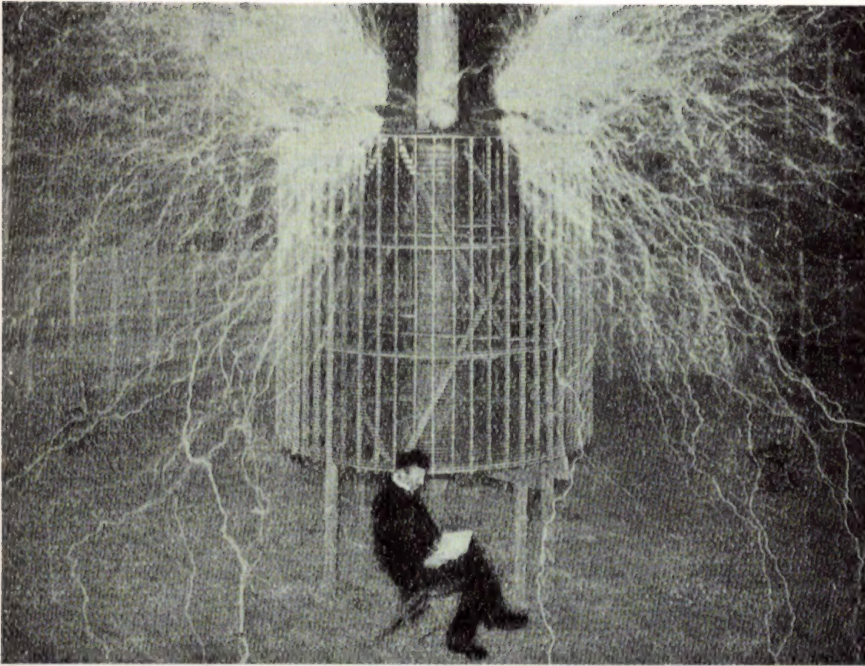
In the next 20 years, Tesla made an astounding number of discoveries in the field of electrical and radio engineering. Unhappily, due to a succession of accidents in which many of his writings were destroyed, and to the neglect that his name has suffered, it is not always possible to determine the date at which many of his discoveries were made, and so he is seldom credited as a pioneer. There is no doubt, nevertheless, that he, not Marconi, was the discoverer of the tuned circuit upon which radio is based, a fact



Above: part of Tesla's application for a US patent on the device now known as a 'Tesla coil'. It converts low-voltage direct current into alternating current of very high voltage, which, as Tesla stated in the application, could be used to power fluorescent lamps or produce 'Roentgen shadows' (x-ray images)



Left: the circuits used at Colorado Springs. A low-voltage AC current (blue) was amplified by a giant modified Tesla coil (green). The voltage was still further boosted in the final circuit, through which current was drawn from the ground and discharged from the transmitting mast

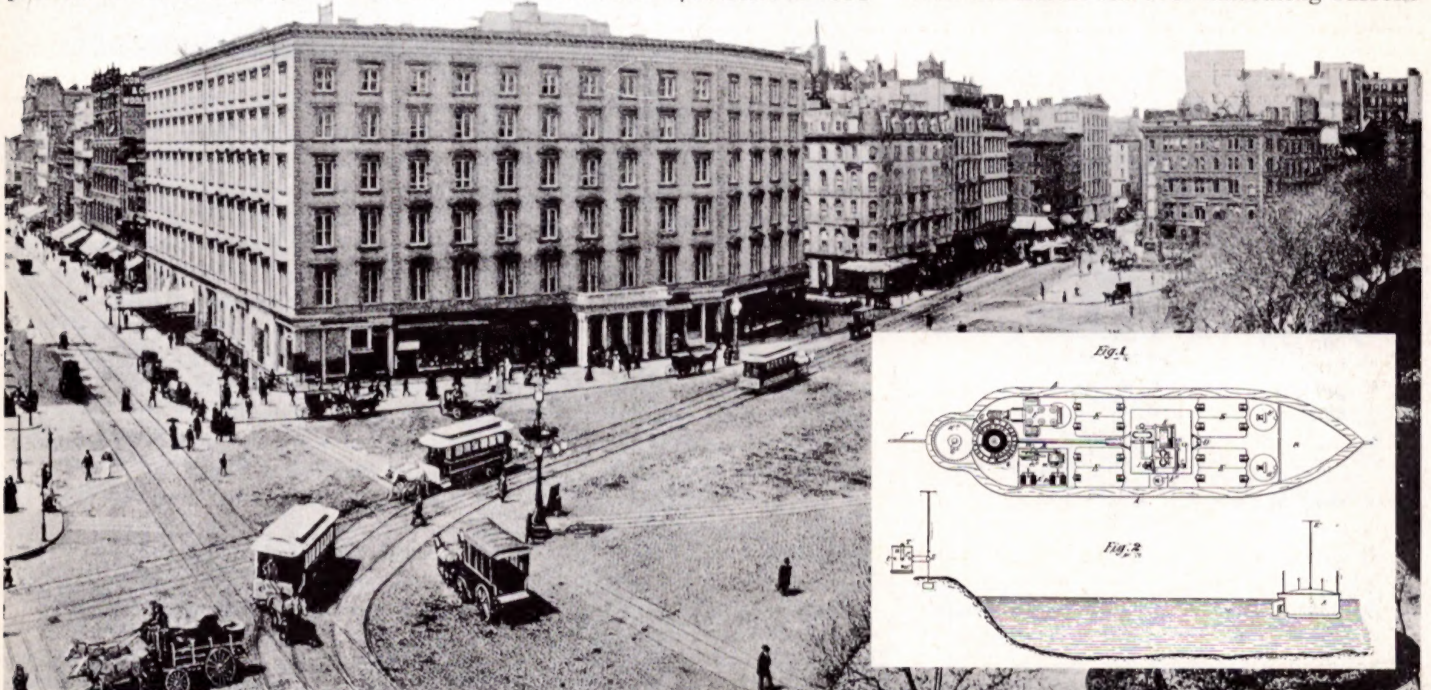


determined by the US Supreme Court only in the year of his death. It is probable, also, that he was the first to observe cathode rays and X-rays, ultraviolet radiation, and the therapeutic effects upon the human body of high-frequency currents. He was the first to design the fore-runner of the fluorescent lighting tube, and he may well have developed a laser-like device.

In 1912 Tesla refused the nomination for the Nobel prize in physics; it was said that he felt that he should have received it in 1909 in place of Marconi. Certainly, as early as 1898, he had demonstrated a radio-controlled boat in Madison Square Garden, New York, and in 1899 he built a powerful transmitting station at Colorado Springs, situated on a plateau in the foothills of the Rockies.

Above: a discharge of millions of volts at Colorado Springs. It was not Tesla's practice to use these artificial lightning strokes as reading lamps, as this picture suggests: he was photographed with flash powder and then moved to a safe distance while the current flowed and the film was re-exposed

Below: Madison Square Garden, New York, where Tesla's demonstration of a radio-controlled boat enthralled spectators in 1898



Unlike Marconi, however, Tesla was concerned with the transmission not only of minute quantities of energy in the form of radio signals but also of huge amounts of electrical energy for domestic and industrial use. In 1899 he succeeded in pumping power into the atmosphere equivalent to many millions of watts with an immense coil generating some 10 million volts.

The experimental installation that Tesla constructed at Colorado Springs was a barn-shaped building nearly 100 feet (30 metres) square. From the centre of the roof a skeletal tower supported a mast nearly 200 feet (60 metres) high on top of which was mounted a copper ball some 3 feet (90 centimetres) in diameter. Inside the building was a circular enclosure like a fence, some 75 feet (23 metres) in diameter, on which was wound the primary coil of his transmitter; the secondary coil was about 10 feet (3 metres) in diameter, and was connected to the mast.

Circuits in tune

The principle behind the tuned resonant circuit is very like that of the child's swing. A small push starts the swing, and the same small push, applied at the right moment, soon has the swing moving high and wide. In the same way, a succession of electrical pulses, applied with the correct frequency to the primary coil, will produce highly magnified pulses in the secondary coil.

These pulses in the mast connected to Tesla's secondary coil would generate high-frequency radio waves that would travel to the far side of the globe and then return. If they were precisely tuned to the natural frequency of oscillation of electrical currents in the Earth, they would, on their return, exactly reinforce the voltage pulses in the mast, and boost the current that was drawn from the Earth. An ever-increasing current

would surge through the apparatus. The entire planet would be used as a further 'secondary circuit' to amplify the current.

The story of how Tesla, 'properly attired in cutaway coat and black derby hat for the auspicious occasion', put his apparatus into operation is dramatically told in John J. O'Neill's *Prodigal genius*. While Tesla watched the top of the mast from outside the building, his assistant Czito stood apprehensively by the controls within. When he closed the switch the secondary coil was surrounded by a halo of electrical fire, sparks crackled through every part of the building, and there came a sharp snap from high overhead.

Now it was followed by a tremendous upsurge of sound. The crackling from the coil swelled into a crescendo . . . the original staccato snap was followed by a sharper one. . . . They came closer together like the rattle of a machine gun. The bang high in the air became tremendously louder; it was now the roar of a cannon, with the discharges rapidly following each other as if a gigantic artillery battle was taking place over the building. . . . There was a strange ghostly blue light in the great barnlike structure. The coils were flaming with masses of fiery hair. Everything in the building was spouting needles of flame. . . .

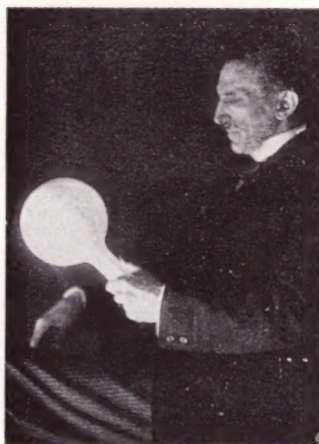
Outside, Tesla stood entranced. From the copper ball on top of the mast, bolts of lightning were shooting out: fingers of fire nearly 135 feet (40 metres) in length.

Testing to destruction

Suddenly the man-made lightning ceased. Tesla hurried back into his laboratory, protesting to Czito that he had given no orders to stop the experiment. But Czito pointed silently to his control dials, which showed that the power supply had failed. The experiment had completely burnt out the generating system of the Colorado Springs Electric Company.

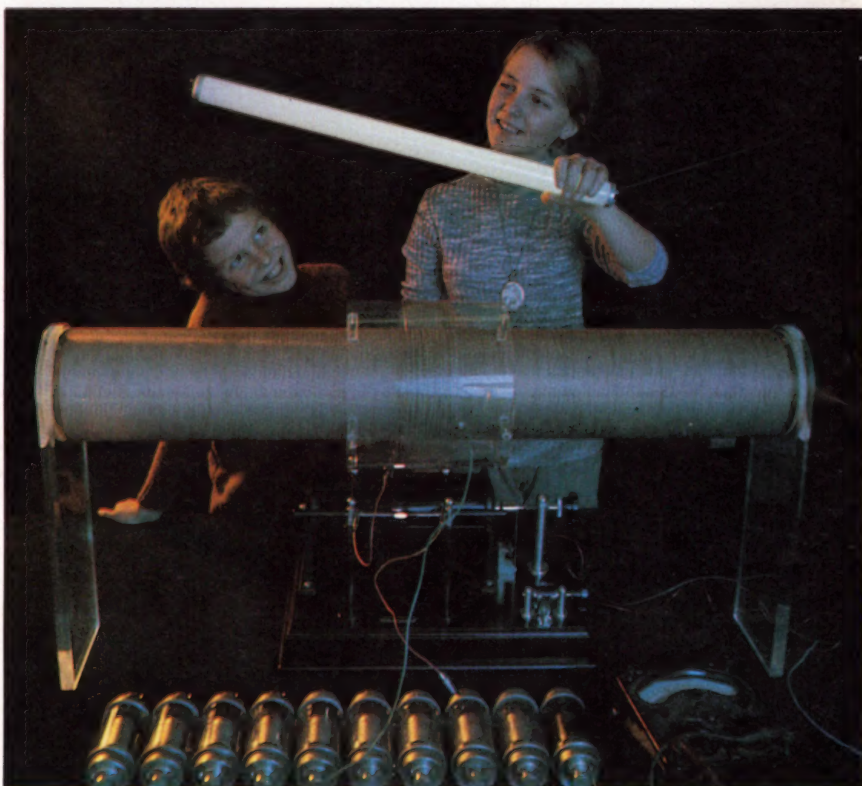
Fortunately, the company's generator was one of Tesla's own design, and within a week he had it operating again. Some of the implications of the results he obtained from his experiments were indicated in a paper he wrote the following year.

That communication without wires to any point of the globe is practical with such apparatus would need no demonstration, but through a discovery I made I obtained absolute certitude. Popularly explained it is exactly this: When we raise the voice and hear an echo in reply, we know that the sound of the voice must have reached a distant wall, or boundary, and must have been reflected from the same. Exactly as the sound, so an electrical wave is reflected, and the same evidence which is afforded by an echo is offered by an



electrical phenomenon known as a 'stationary' wave – that is, a wave with fixed nodal and ventral regions. Instead of sending sound vibrations toward a distant wall, I have sent electrical vibrations toward the remote boundaries of the earth, and instead of the wall the earth has replied. In place of an echo I have obtained a stationary electrical wave . . . reflected from afar.

A standard demonstration of the effects of the Tesla coil is to cause an electric light bulb to burn brightly without any connection to an electrical supply. With his giant Colorado Springs installation, Tesla was able to light 200 of Edison's incandescent lamps at a



Top: Tesla photographed by the light of a fluorescent lamp of his own invention. High-frequency power is fed to the lamp through wires hidden on Tesla's body. Invisible ultraviolet radiation is produced by low-pressure gas in the lamp and causes a coating on the inside surface to glow. This principle is used in modern fluorescent lighting, with smaller voltages and frequencies

Above: a modern demonstration of Tesla's ideas. The fluorescent tube is being energised by radio-frequency waves from the large Tesla coil, without connecting wires

distance of 25 miles (40 kilometres).

Seventy-eight years later, the *London Evening Standard* reported that some remarkable electrical storms had been taking place over Canada, and that Tesla's last surviving assistant, Arthur Matthews, had been intensively interrogated by an unnamed Russian electrical engineer. Shortly afterward, the same newspaper reported that Major-General George Keegan, former head of us Air Force Intelligence, had publicly voiced his apprehension that the Russians possessed a 'particle gun' capable of detonating ballistic missiles in flight.

These events were linked to the work of Tesla. For it seemed that the principles that had enabled him to transmit energy to distant places and to tap the energies of the Earth were now being harnessed for war.

Tesla's claim to have discovered the ultimate secret weapon is examined on page 1026

Alchemy in both East and West was concerned with the purification of the soul as much as with the transmutation of metals. BRIAN INNES relates the two traditions to each other and to primitive magic



ALCHEMY GATHERED into its literature a whole bestiary of symbols: the black crow; the white pelican, its breast spotted red with its own blood, on which, by popular belief, its young fed; the phoenix; the dove; the peacock, with its tail of wonderful colours; red and green lions; dragons of all hues. There were human symbols as well: the red man and the white woman, sometimes twined together in sexual union; the king murdered by his own son; and above all the androgyne, or hermaphrodite, which represented the combination of opposites that produced the Philosopher's Stone.

The symbols are so striking and so numerous that they caught the attention of the psychologist Carl Jung, who devoted a whole book to them. Throughout his life, Jung had studied the way in which the same kind of symbols appear to have the same kind of meaning in communities and cultures widely separated in time or place. It was, Jung thought, as if these symbols were a part of mankind's fundamental make-up.

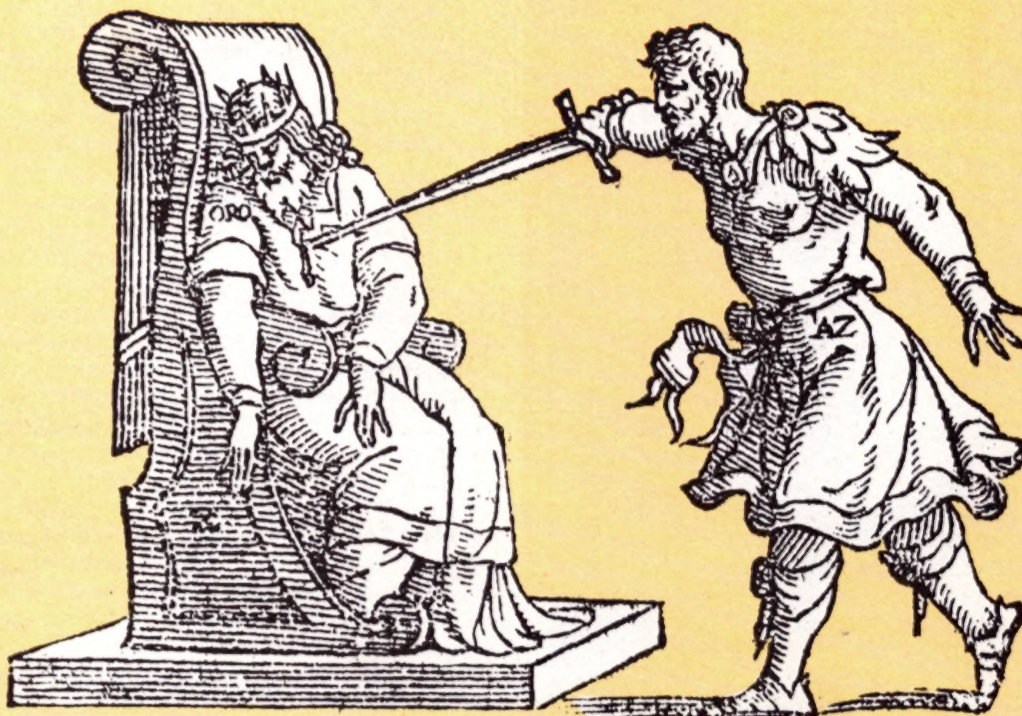
One of Jung's predecessors was Herbert Silberer. In his book *Problems of mysticism and its symbolism* he attaches great importance to the work of one of the first alchemists to set his thoughts down in writing, Zosimos of Panopolis, in Egypt. Zosimos, who lived about AD 300, wrote down some of the secrets of alchemy in terms of a strange vision:

I asked him who he was and in a feeble voice he answered me: I am he-who-is, the priest of the sanctuary, and I am overwhelmed by another's strength. For at break of day came a deputy who

Alchemy: sex and symbolism

Above: when lead is kept molten in a basin over a furnace, it will form an encrustation of bright yellow crystals of lead oxide, or litharge. Here the aged Saturn symbolises lead, while the gold-crested white dove is the 'sublime' spirit of the lead, its quintessence. That, at least, is one interpretation of this illustration from the 16th-century manuscript *Splendor solis*, but several other equally plausible explanations have been proposed

Right: in this woodcut from *The new pearl of great price* (1546), the crowned king is gold, killed by his son Mercury. After many vicissitudes he rises again



swiftly seized me, cleaving me with a sword and dividing me in pieces; and after flaying all the skin from my head he mixed my bones with my flesh and burned them in the fire. . . .

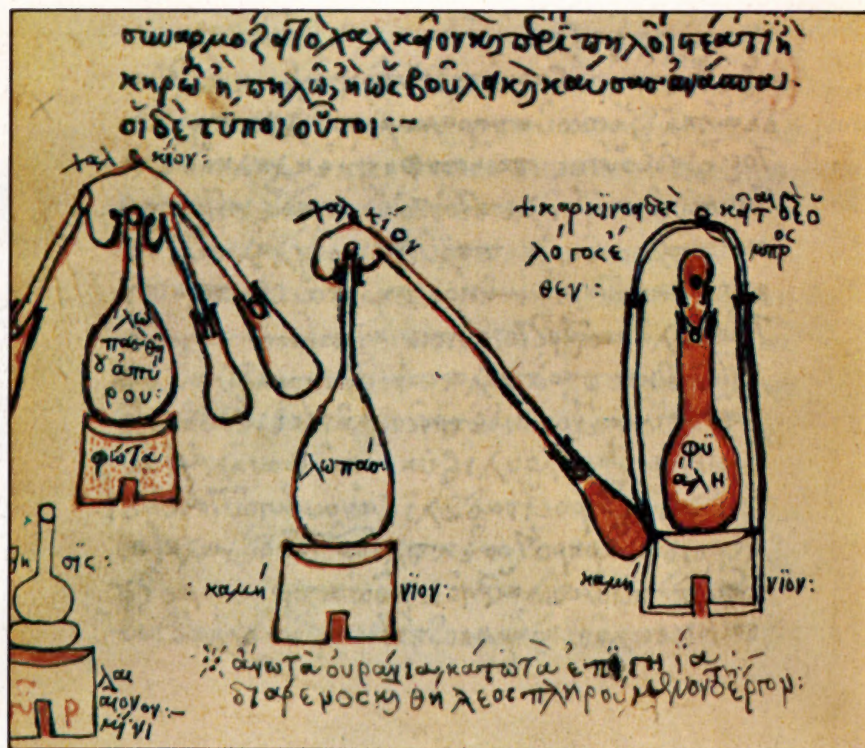
When we look at the illustrations from alchemical works written some 1200 years later, or read the descriptions of the Great Work, it is not really surprising to find the same kind of imagery employed, for in this instance it is easy to trace a direct line of descent. But what is remarkable is to compare the vision of Zosimos with the visions of the shamans, the priests of the nomadic tribes of Siberia and North America.

As adolescents, future shamans were suddenly seized by a 'sickness', a kind of divine madness that was the first sign of their priestly vocation. During this phase they saw extraordinary visions. One future shaman, for instance, described how he saw himself enter a mountain, where a naked man was working a bellows to keep a cauldron heating on a fire. The man seized the shaman with a great pair of tongs, cut off his head and sliced up his body, and threw everything into the cauldron, where it cooked for three years. There were three anvils in the cave, and on one of them the man forged the shaman's head; then he rescued the bones, joined them together, and covered them with flesh.

The mystique of the metalworker

Many of the initiation visions seen by the shamans took similar forms to this, and the famous anthropologist Mercia Eliade has shown that they are closely related to the high priestly standing enjoyed by metalworkers among primitive peoples.

In some very early mythologies, the Sun was seen as plunging every evening into the womb of Earth, sowing the 'seed' of the metals. It was supposed that the metals gradually developed, passing through various stages, until the final result was gold. (We have seen how even the scientist Aristotle believed that the Earth somehow 'bred' metals – see page 954.)



Top: a 15th-century copy of an alchemical treatise by Zosimos of Panopolis

Above: a travelling Tuareg silversmith from Niger. These artisans are often outcasts, regarded with fear and awe

Left: another tantalising illustration from *Splendor solis*. A fair white woman offers a scarlet cloak to a man emerging from primeval blackness into a ruddy form that is reminiscent in some ways of a new-born child

Metalworkers, who knew how to take mineral ores and, by smelting them in a womb-shaped furnace, to produce metals, and who further understood how to shape the metal produced, were thus performing much the same kind of marvel as the Sun-god himself. They were venerated as priests who stood closer than ordinary men to the god.

It was natural to suppose that, if a man could make himself truly god-like, he would gain the power to transform baser metals into gold, by exactly the same processes that they underwent in the Earth. This belief was expressed on the Emerald Tablet, a record said to have been inscribed by the god Thoth, who was supposed to have taught the ancient Egyptians the sciences and the art of writing. (The Greeks identified Thoth with one form of their god Hermes – Hermes Trismegistos, the 'thrice-great'. Hence the term 'hermetic art' for alchemy.)

The principle of the Emerald Tablet can be expressed in a phrase widely used by alchemists: 'as above, so below'. The tablet appears to have carried a set of mystical instructions for the manufacture of gold by transmutation – the 'operation of Sol'. The seventh of these precepts reads: 'Separate the earth from the fire, the subtle from the gross, acting prudently and with judgement.' The eighth reads: 'Ascend with the greatest sagacity from the Earth to heaven, and then again descend to the Earth, and unite together the powers of things superior and things inferior. . . . ' These can be read as straightforward metaphors for separating and recombining elements. The 'ascent' and 'descent' could refer to the circulatory action of a kerotakis, a type of still.

But on another level these same precepts



could be, and were, taken as referring to a spiritual work of self-purification – a long and arduous liberation of the divine part of the alchemist's nature from the grossness of his body and senses.

All these various strands came together: the primitive belief that the search for a way to transmute base metals into gold involved a succession of god-like actions developed into the belief that an important part of alchemy was the attempt to become like God – 'as above, so below'. From this, no doubt, stems the conviction that the final result of the alchemical quest was to achieve eternal life.

It is striking that, although there is no evidence of any connection between the

Above: the Emerald Tablet, as it was imagined by Heinrich Khunrath in his *Amphitheatrum sapientiae aeternae* (*Amphitheatre of eternal wisdom*), which was first published in 1609. Below the Latin text, Khunrath provides a translation into German

alchemy of the Arabs (as it was later transmitted to medieval Europe) and that of the Far East, the Chinese alchemists were also concerned with the attainment of immortality. They were undoubtedly very interested in the production of gold, but principally for its value as an elixir. The substance with which they attempted to prolong life was cinnabar, a bright-red compound of two of the vital substances of western alchemy: mercury and sulphur.

The ancient philosophy of Tao is concerned with the delicate blending of two fundamental energies: *yin*, the feminine principle, and *yang*, the masculine. The careful commingling of *yin* and *yang* was believed to be a means of prolonging life.

At the lower levels of Taoist practice, the mixing of *yin* and *yang* could be achieved by controlled sexual intercourse; the more advanced mystics practised various meditative procedures, designed to bring about a kind of 'distillation' of *yang* within the body. These practices were commonly known as 'sexual alchemy'.

The body was seen as a tier of three crucibles (*tan-t'ien*) on a central column. The lowest, the cauldron or three-footed furnace, was in the belly below the solar plexus; the second was behind the solar plexus; the third between the eyes.

The 'prime substance' of this inner alchemy was the primitive sexual energy, *ching*, residing in the lowest crucible. It was one of three forces, the others being *ch'i*, the moving vitality, in the middle crucible and *shen*, the luminous personal spirit, in the upper crucible. Meditation began with rhythmical deep breathing: the 'heavenly fire of the heart' began to circulate and was impelled – as if by a bellows – down to the furnace in the belly. Gradually, as energy rose up the 'distillation column' of the spine, the content of *yang* increased; then, as it

An experiment with immortality

The Tao master Wei Po-Yang went into the mountains one day, accompanied by three disciples and his white dog. The master had concocted a certain 'gold medicine', reputed to be the Elixir of Immortality. He fed a little of the medicine to his dog, which promptly died. Wei Po-Yang said to his disciples: 'To live without taking the medicine would be just the same as to die of the medicine. I must take it.' He did so and, like the dog, expired.

Two of the grief-stricken disciples immediately set off to find implements with which to bury their late master. But the third, Yü by name, was more thoughtful; it seemed to him that Wei Po-Yang must have known what he was



doing. Yü therefore took some of the medicine himself, and also died.

A short while later, Wei Po-Yang revived, for his medicine had contained only enough impurity to cause temporary death. He put a little more of the medicine into the mouths of the dog and of Yü, both of whom also recovered after a few moments. Together, the three strolled off into immortality.

Wei Po-Yang lived in the second century AD, and he is credited with the authorship of the treatise *Ts'an-t'ung-ch'i* (*The three ways unified and harmonised*), a work that made Taoism into a coherent system. Among other things it deals with the 'pills of immortality', which, says Wei, are 'extremely efficacious, although their individual size is so small that they occupy only the point of a knife or the edge of a spatula.'

Alchemy

condensed at the top of the head and descended again, *yin* replaced *yang*. Eventually, the heat of the furnace was sufficient to drive the *ching*, transformed, up to the second crucible, where it combined with the *ch'i*. As in the alchemist's vessel known as a pelican, the two were continuously recycled, rising up the central column and then dropping back into the furnace for further purification. As the furnace was fanned to greater heat, the combined *ching* and *ch'i* eventually reached the *shen* in the upper crucible; and suddenly the 'inner copulation of the dragon and the tiger' took place. Su Tung P'o put it this way in AD 1110:

The dragon is mercury. It is the semen and the blood. He issues from the kidneys and is stored in the liver. The tiger is lead. He is breath and bodily strength. He issues from the mind and the lungs bear him. When the mind is moved, breath and strength act with it. When the kidneys are flushed, then semen and blood flow. . . .

When the *ching-ch'i-shen* was rising and descending like liquid in a briskly bubbling still, it progressively purified until it was one with the energies of the cosmos. Then a special ambrosial fluid flowed like saliva in the mouth. Two lights, gold and silver, slowly descended into the furnace; the body's breathing ceased, to be replaced by the breathing of a foetus formed from the impregnation of the ambrosia by the gold and silver lights. Slowly, the foetus grew into a homunculus, a 'crystal child'; it rose slowly to the crown of the head, and was there born as an immortal.

The alchemy of Tantra

Taoist inner alchemy possesses a striking resemblance to the basic beliefs of Tantra, which is claimed to be the oldest religion of India. The Tantric meditator begins by visualising the inner central column of his spine, the *sushumna*, as the axis of the cosmos. Up the *sushumna* are strung a series of 'wheels', or *chakras*; there are usually six, with a seventh in the top of the skull. The lowest *chakra* is at the base of the pelvis, and here sleeps the serpent Kundalini, coiled around an inner phallus (*lingam*), with its tip in her mouth. By means of various yoga exercises Kundalini is awakened, straightens herself, and enters the bottom of the *sushumna*. The ultimate intention is that Kundalini shall ascend permanently to the top of the skull, where a transcendental sexual union takes place.

The postures that awaken Kundalini are frequently sexual, and even the Tantric ascetic will imagine an ideal girl as Kundalini ascends. The Tantric obtains his energy through sexual intercourse, and the woman is regarded as the possessor of particularly important power.

The Tantric yogi is credited with many abilities, of which one is the transmutation of



Above: in this Indian drawing from the 18th century, the 'subtle body' is represented as a plant growing from the ground. The *chakras*, or centres of energy positioned along the spinal *sushumna*, are shown symbolically by human and animal figures



Above and top right: the close symbolic relationship between Western alchemy and Tantric 'sexual alchemy' is clearly shown in these two pictures, one an Indian popular print of the early 19th century, the other a 16th-century European woodcut. In the upper illustration, the goddess Kali has beheaded herself, and her blood sprays onto the tongues of her attendants, while a couple make love in a lotus flower at her feet. The lower illustration shows the hermetic androgyne, a being formed when the son of Hermes and Aphrodite became united with the nymph Salmacis – a symbol of the union of opposites in chemical reactions



base metals into gold; even his urine and faeces may bring about transmutation. He recognises the importance of mercury and sulphur. As an ancient treatise puts it:

When quicksilver is killed with an equal weight of sulphur it cures leprosy; when killed with thrice its weight of sulphur it cures mental languor; when it is killed with four times its weight of sulphur it removes grey hair and wrinkles; when it is killed by five times its weight of sulphur it cures consumption; when it is killed with six times its weight of sulphur it becomes a panacea for all the ills. . . .

The close similarity of the imagery – and the substances used – in alchemy in all these very different cultures is striking. A major difference is equally striking: that medieval European alchemy does not seem to have had any explicit sexual basis. It was not until ancient Taoist and Tantric manuscripts became available in translation toward the end of the 19th century that sex entered western alchemy. The magical society called the Golden Dawn taught some kind of esoteric link between the two; Karl Kellner, who founded the Ordo Templis Orientis (OTO) in 1906 was more explicit. And Aleister Crowley, who was a member of both secret societies, seized upon the connection with enthusiasm, and developed his own brand of sexual magic. And then the psychologists who found the symbolism of alchemy so fascinating were to teach that sex is at the heart of all human action.

Alchemists continue their work today, encouraged by the findings of the atomic scientists. See page 1014

Spirit guides at Glastonbury

Many of the more impressive fragments of the Glastonbury ruins were uncovered in excavations that began in 1909. COLIN WILSON tells the extraordinary story of the 'psychic archaeology' that unearthed them

GLASTONBURY IS UNDOUBTEDLY one of the most ancient sacred sites in Britain. Standing high above the surrounding countryside, it is an obvious landmark, and archaeological evidence suggests that it has been a place of religious significance since the time of the Druids. But there are other kinds of evidence that suggest the Tor was a holy place long before the Celts came to Britain in the seventh or sixth century BC. A modern investigator, Stephen Jenkins, who studied Buddhism in Tibet, one day asked his guru about Shambala, the legendary sacred place of the ancient Hindus. He was astonished to be told that it was located in Britain at the place now called Glastonbury.

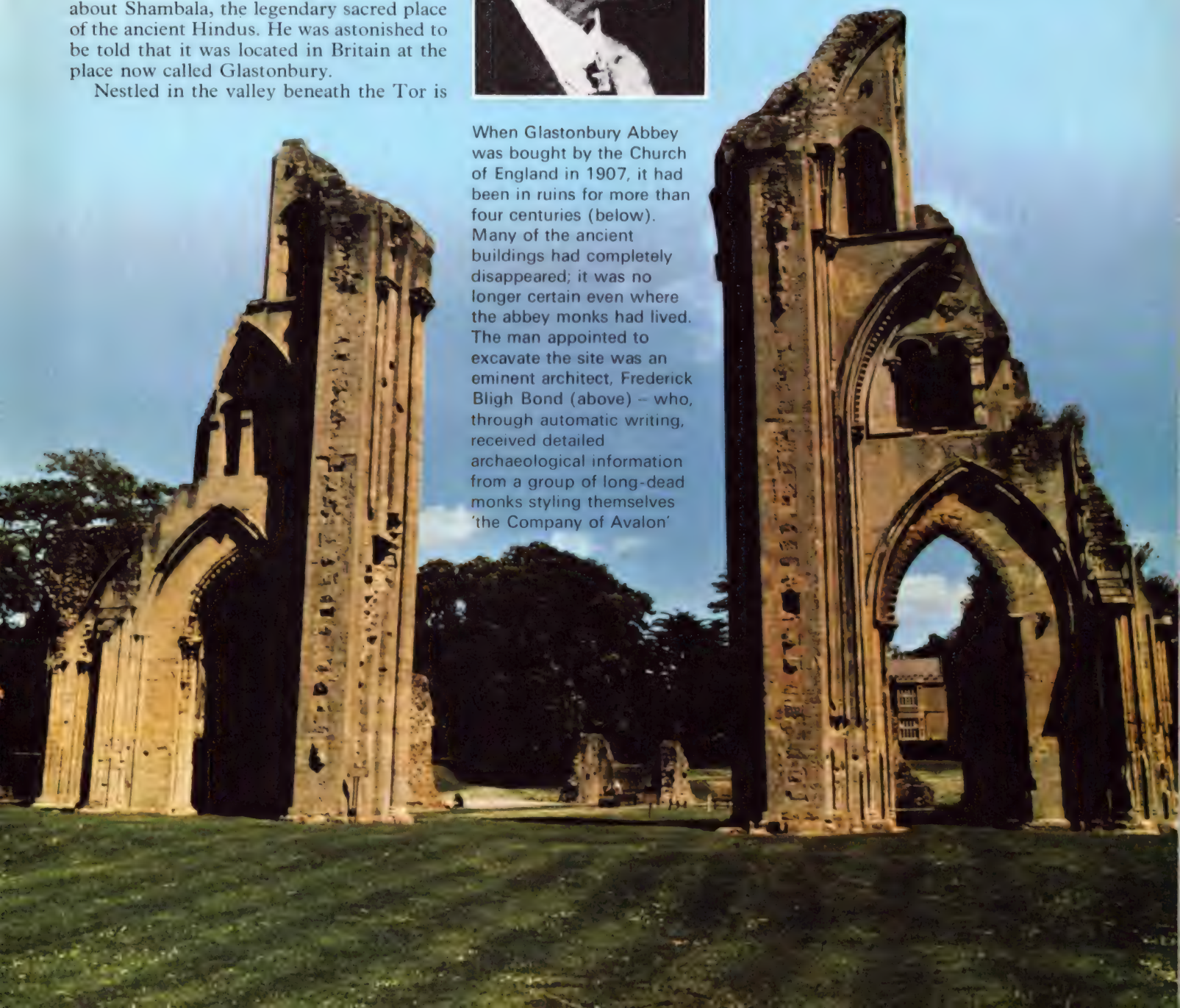
Nestled in the valley beneath the Tor is



When Glastonbury Abbey was bought by the Church of England in 1907, it had been in ruins for more than four centuries (below). Many of the ancient buildings had completely disappeared; it was no longer certain even where the abbey monks had lived. The man appointed to excavate the site was an eminent architect, Frederick Bligh Bond (above) – who, through automatic writing, received detailed archaeological information from a group of long-dead monks styling themselves 'the Company of Avalon'

Glastonbury Abbey, which was founded in the fifth century by St Patrick before he went on to convert Ireland. According to Giraldus Cambrensis, it was the burial place of King Arthur – and the discovery in 1191 of a coffin containing the skeletons of a man and woman, bearing the inscription 'Here lies Arthur, the Once and Future King', seemed to confirm it. Because of its association with Arthur, the abbey became one of the richest and most powerful in England. In 1539, Henry VIII's commissioners executed its last abbot, Richard Whyting, on top of the Tor. The abbey was destroyed. And for almost four centuries it remained a neglected ruin.

In 1907 the abbey ruins were bought by the Church of England for £36,000. Yet,





amazingly enough, the Church had no idea what it had bought. Time and vandalism had done their work so well that no one was even certain where the monks had lived. Obviously, the site had to be carefully excavated. And the man chosen to do the job was a 43-year-old architect named Frederick Bligh Bond.

Bond certainly seemed an admirable man for the job. He was one of England's leading experts on Gothic architecture and the restoration of old churches. But the Church of England might have been slightly less enthusiastic if it had known something about Bond's background – for Bond had psychic and occult leanings. As a child he had been a dreamer and a bookworm, and when he had to go into the world and make a living, his first reactions were shock and disgust. Then he came across a book called *The night side of nature* by Katherine Crowe – one of the great Victorian bestsellers, full of discussions of psychic powers and occult mysteries. Bond became a lifelong devotee of psychic studies. When he became apprenticed to the architect Charles Hansen – who specialised in Gothic architecture – he had a chance to turn his romantic love of the medieval period to practical account. By 1907 he was one of England's most successful and respectable architects. But his association with Glastonbury Abbey was to put an end to all that.

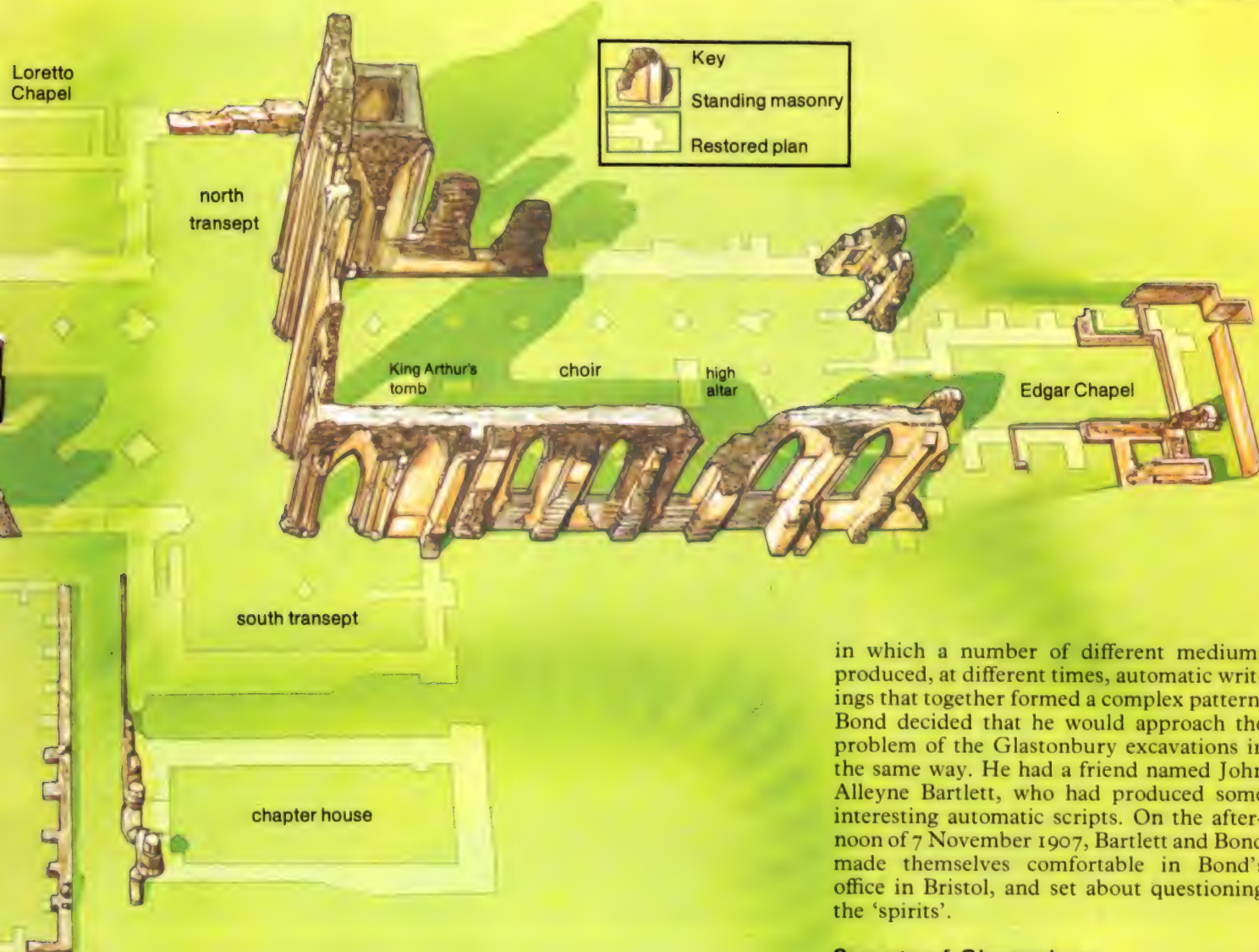
In the late 15th century the last Abbot of Glastonbury but one, Richard Bere, had started a cult of Joseph of Arimathea – Christ's uncle – who, according to legend, had visited Glastonbury with the child Jesus, and returned there later with the cup used at the Last Supper – the Holy Grail. Abbot Bere was said to have built two chapels, called the Loretto Chapel and the Edgar Chapel. But these were apparently destroyed

The plan (above) indicates the extant ruins of Glastonbury Abbey, together with the positions of foundations that have been excavated or have been known to exist in the past. Frederick Bligh Bond's great find was the Edgar Chapel, which was known from records to have existed but was completely lost. For some years, it was believed that he had also succeeded in locating the Loretto Chapel. Although there is undoubtedly a building on the site, this is not believed to have been a sacristy. The aerial view (right) shows the extent to which the abbey ruins have been excavated

by Henry VIII's vandals, and by the 19th century no one even knew where they were situated. Finding them was one of the tasks assigned to Bond.

There was one minor problem – there was no money to organise a full-scale dig. Bond therefore had to rely on luck and 'educated guesses'. Worse still, he had a rival architect called Caroe, who had been appointed to 'preserve' the ruins, and who obviously hoped to stumble upon the right answers before Bond did and take the credit for the discovery. Bond needed results quickly. And he decided upon a bold solution. He would ask the 'spirits'.

This was not, of course, quite the way that he expressed it. He said merely that he was going to undertake a 'psychological experiment'. At this time, everyone who was interested in psychical research was aware of the extraordinary case that has become known as the 'cross-correspondences' (see page 478),



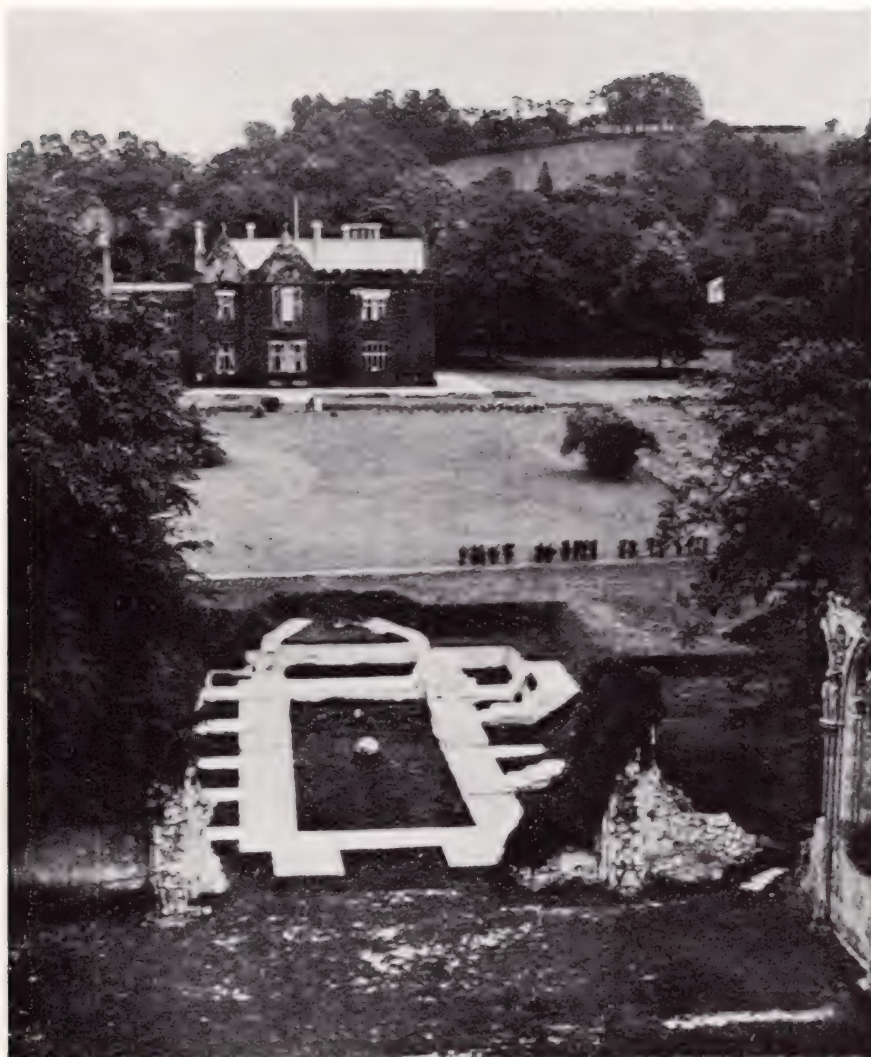
in which a number of different mediums produced, at different times, automatic writings that together formed a complex pattern. Bond decided that he would approach the problem of the Glastonbury excavations in the same way. He had a friend named John Alleyne Bartlett, who had produced some interesting automatic scripts. On the afternoon of 7 November 1907, Bartlett and Bond made themselves comfortable in Bond's office in Bristol, and set about questioning the 'spirits'.

Secrets of Glastonbury

Their method was simple. Bond sat down opposite Bartlett at a plain wooden table, resting his fingers lightly on Bartlett's hand; Bartlett held a pencil above a sheet of paper. Then Bond cleared his throat and asked: 'Can you tell us anything about Glastonbury?' Bartlett's hand began to write. When the men deciphered the small, irregular writing, they saw that it said: 'All knowledge is eternal and is available to mental sympathy. I was not in sympathy with the monks – I cannot find a monk yet.'

This looked promising. Bond suggested that he knew a few living monks who might form a sympathetic link. At this, the pencil began to move again, tracing an outline that they soon recognised as the abbey, but with a long rectangle stuck on its eastern end. It was signed 'Gulielmus Monachus' – William the Monk. The rectangle looked too large to be a chapel, so Bond asked for a more careful drawing. The pencil obliged, with another precise drawing of a chapel, and also showed two smaller chapels to the north. Bond asked who had built it, and received the answer – in Latin – 'Abbot Bere', and the statement that this was the Edgar Chapel. It was added to, said the writer, by Abbot Whyting, in whose





reign it was destroyed. When they asked the name of the writer, it wrote: 'Ego Johannes Bryant, monk and lapidator.' (Lapidator means 'stonemason'.)

The two men were excited, yet at the same time disappointed. Someone who seemed to know what he was talking about was answering the questions, but the answers looked too good to be true. Did these 'facts' about the Edgar Chapel come from their own minds?

Four days later, they tried again. Their 'communicator' began by saying that he was becoming tired towards the end of the last session, but that the monks were now very eager to communicate. 'They say the times are now ripe and the curse is departing.' Then another hand wrote: 'Benedicite. Go unto Glaston soon. . . .' And later, the hand added: 'Ye names of builded things are very hard in Latin tongue. . . . My son, thou canst not understand. Wee wold speak in the Englyshe tongue. . . .' To the question, 'Tell us more about yourself,' it replied: 'I died in 1533.' He was, he said, curator of the chapel in the time of Henry VII.

From then on, Bond and Bartlett held regular sessions, and the monks of Glastonbury poured out information. There were several different monks, and several different

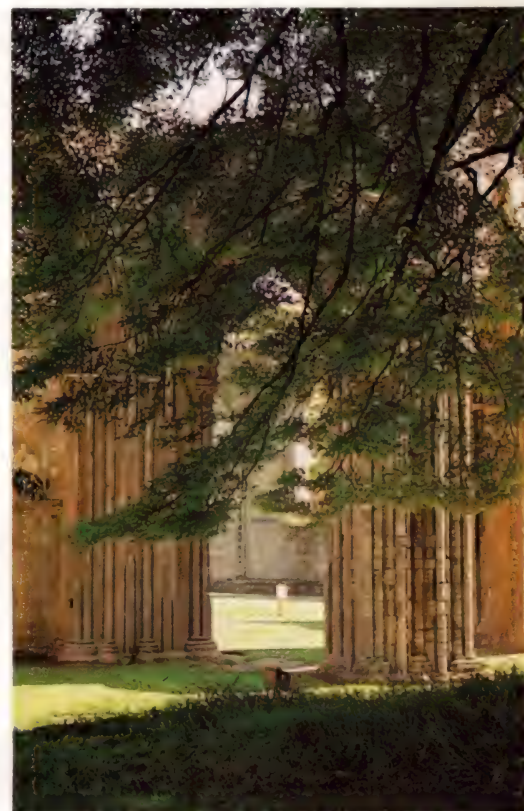
Above: the foundations of the Edgar Chapel, in a photograph taken shortly after they were restored by Bond. The site of the chapel was identified by one of Bond's ghostly informants, a monk named Johannes Bryant. In one respect, however, it seems that Johannes was mistaken. The angled walls at the far end of the chapel are no longer to be seen: Johannes claimed that they were built as an apse by Abbot Bere, but experts now believe that they are actually a water channel and part of an ancient abbey wall, and they have been removed

Right: the tomb of Arthur, 'the once and future king', seen through the peaceful ruins of the abbey nave

handwritings. But was it all pure fantasy?

Finally, in 1908, the money for excavation became available. Digging started in 1909. And, to Bond's amazement and delight, it was soon abundantly clear that the monks had been telling him the truth.

Understandably, the first thing he wanted to know was whether there really was a large chapel at the east end of the abbey church. Johannes Bryant had also told him that he would find the remains of two towers at the west end. In May 1909, the workmen began to dig trenches at the east end of the ruined church. When Bond's rival Caroe came and looked at the work, he must have been mystified by the apparently random arrangement of the trenches. Any scepticism he felt must have changed to astonishment as the workmen quickly came upon an immense and unsuspected wall running north and south for 31 feet (10 metres). Moreover, excavation at the other end of the ruined church quickly revealed the outline of two unsuspected towers. To Bond's superiors, it must have seemed like a run of incredible luck, combined with intelligent deduction. As to Bond, he must have wondered many times whether he should reveal the secret of his ghostly 'communicators'. Yet common sense told him that he should be cautious. His employer was the Church of England – and the Church has never been very sympathetic to Spiritualism. Of course, it believes in life after death, since this is part of Christian dogma; but from the beginning, the Church has shown itself hostile and sceptical about the notion of communication with the dead. So how could Bond explain





Above: the Lady Chapel, one of the best-preserved parts of the abbey, was consecrated in 1189. It is also known as St Joseph's Chapel, after St Joseph of Arimathea, Christ's uncle, who, according to legend, brought the child Jesus to Glastonbury

Right: Bond and Bartlett were told by one of their ghostly communicators of the location of the unfinished Loretto Chapel. When the site was excavated in 1920, the foundations of a building were found, but it is now believed that they are not, in fact, remains of the Loretto Chapel. The foundations in the photograph have since been covered over with turf



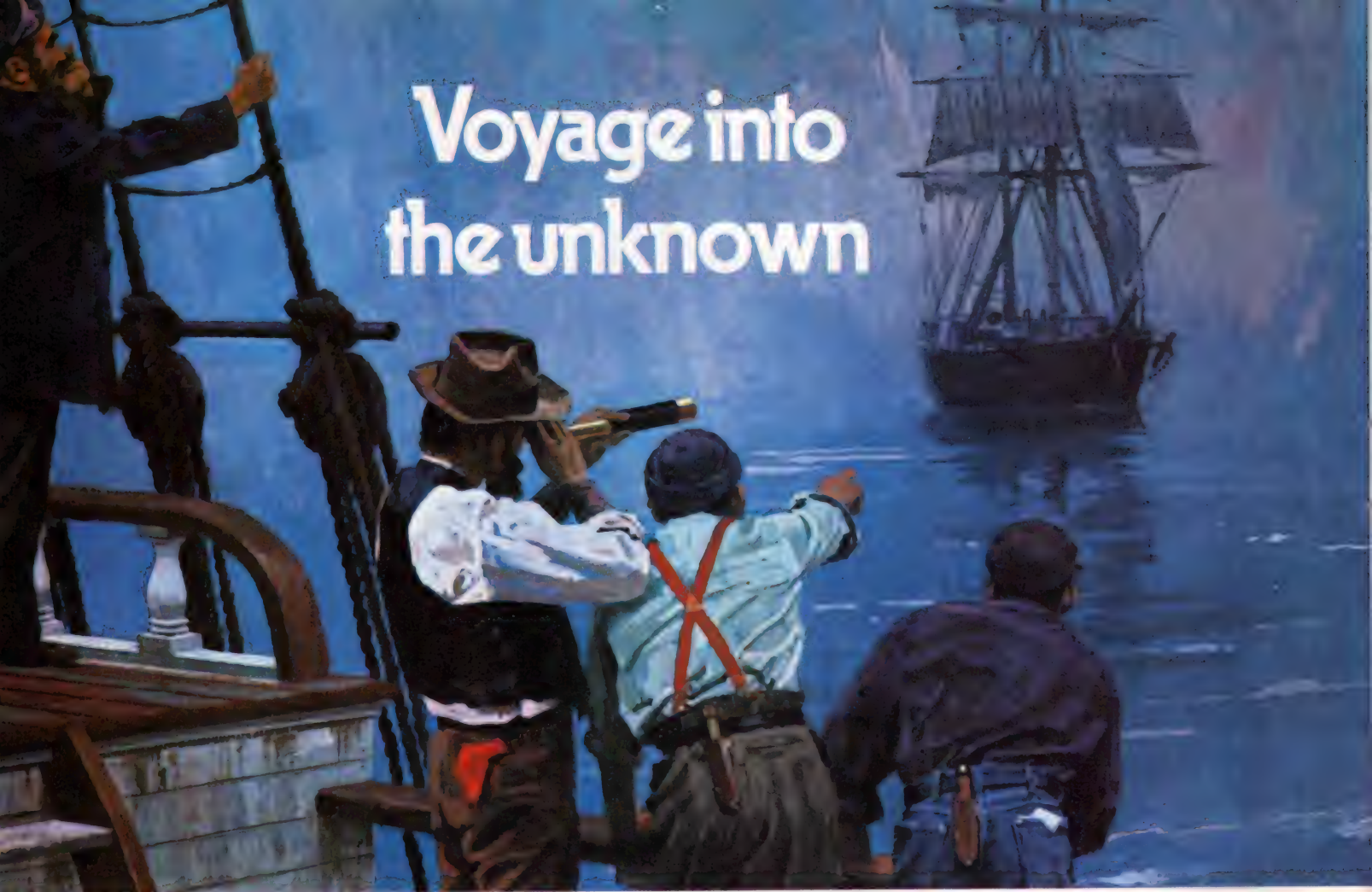
that his communicators called themselves the Company of Avalon – the old name for Glastonbury – and, worse still, described themselves as ‘watchers from the other side’? Wisely, he decided to keep his amazing secret. At least, for the time being.

Meanwhile, discovery followed discovery, and Bond's reputation was greatly enhanced. His monkish correspondents proved to be phenomenally accurate. They told him there was a door in the east wall, leading into the street. This seemed unlikely, since eastern doorways in churches are unusual; yet digging revealed the doorway in the middle of the east wall. They told him the chapel would be 90 feet (28 metres) long, which seemed enormous; excavation showed it to be 87 feet (27 metres), and the wall and plinth added another 3 feet (1 metre). They even told him he would find the remains of azure-coloured windows – which again seemed unlikely, since most stained glass of that period used white and gold. But they duly found their fragments of blue stained glass in the Edgar Chapel. A communicator who seemed to be Abbot Bere said the roof was painted in gold and crimson; digging revealed arch mouldings with gold and crimson paint still on them.

In 1918, 10 years after the start of the triumphant excavations, Bond decided to publish the full story behind the discovery. No doubt he assumed that his success would justify his method. But this assumption proved to be a tragic mistake.

What revelations from the Company of Avalon forced Bond to reveal his secret? See page 1038

Voyage into the unknown



Still-warm tea on the galley table, lifeboats all secure – and the crew of the *Mary Celeste* has vanished. This is the stuff of legend and, as PAUL BEGG reveals, it is complete fiction. So what really happened?

IT DID NOT TAKE LONG for the myth surrounding the disappearance of the *Mary Celeste*'s crew to be born. Indeed, it could be argued that it began in Gibraltar in 1872 when Solly Flood tried in vain to attach guilt to Captain Morehouse and the crew of the *Dei Gratia*. But the story was seized upon by writers and journalists and soon caught the public imagination.

The first major piece of fiction about the ship was published in January 1884 by the prestigious *Cornhill Magazine*, 11 months before Gilman C. Parker deliberately burnt the ship to a cinder (see box). It was a sensational short story called *J. Habakuk Jephson's statement* and it bore little resemblance to the actual facts. It was picked up by American newspapers however and published as fact, much to the outrage of Solly Flood and Horatio Sprague, the US Consul in Gibraltar, both of whom wrote letters condemning the tale.

Apart from its literary worth, *J. Habakuk Jephson's statement* is interesting for two reasons: it was one of the first literary efforts of a young English doctor named Arthur Conan Doyle, and in it *Mary Celeste* is called *Marie Celeste*, the name by which the ship is

Above: crewmen of the *Dei Gratia* sight the mystery ship *Mary Celeste*, in a painting by Gordon A. Johnson. This was commissioned in 1965 by the Atlantic Mutual Insurance Company – the original insurers of the *Mary Celeste*

now most commonly known. However, Conan Doyle was not the first to make the error – this version of the name first appears in *Lloyd's List* of 25 March 1873.

Conan Doyle's story was the first of many fictional accounts that have appeared over the years; for example, a novel based on the mystery was published as recently as 1980. Some of these tales have been presented as straight fiction, others as fictionalised fact (but nevertheless proposing a serious explanation), and quite a few have been intended to be taken as fact.

In the late 1920s *Chamber's Journal* published an article by Lee Kaye purporting to be a true account of what happened aboard *Mary Celeste* as supposedly told by a survivor named John Pemberton (one of the many 'survivors' who have popped up over the years but whose names are mysteriously absent from the crew list).

Pemberton's story was expanded to book length by Laurence J. Keating in 1929 and called *The great Mary Celeste hoax*. It was a bestseller on both sides of the Atlantic; John Pemberton rapidly became the man of the moment. Many journalists sought interviews with him, but Pemberton remained elusive until a 'special correspondent' of the *London Evening Standard* tracked him down – and obtained not only the coveted interview but a photograph as well. Both were published in the *Evening Standard* on 6 May 1929.

However, one of the few true statements



vessel's crew among the victims of whatever unexplained force they consider to exist in the area, imbuing that force with a singular selectivity, and in the process enlarging the Triangle so that it reaches the Azores. A superficially acceptable theory put forward by a number of rational people was that the food or drinking water was contaminated and caused the crew to hallucinate, driving them mad so that they threw themselves over the side. But Oliver Deveau and other members of the *Dei Gratia's* crew used the food and water they found aboard *Mary Celeste* and suffered no ill effects.

The United States Consul in Gibraltar, Horatio Sprague, wrote in July 1887 that:

This case of the *Mary Celeste* is startling, since it appears to be one of those mysteries which no human ingenuity can penetrate sufficiently to account for the abandonment of this vessel and the disappearance of her master, family and crew. . . .

No solution so far offered seems to account for all the circumstances, but it is possible to list some salient facts that might provide a few clues: *Mary Celeste* was abandoned by her captain and crew; those who abandoned ship did so in the ship's yawl. This small vessel would have been overloaded and easily capsized, so the crew's fate is not wholly inexplicable. The ship was abandoned in a hurry: extra clothing was not taken nor – as far as is known – was any food or water, but the crew did not abandon ship in a complete panic, since they took the time to collect the sextant, chronometer, and the ship's papers (apart from the temporary log). Since there was no evidence that *Mary Celeste* had suffered any damage, whatever made the crew abandon her was something they feared had happened or was about to happen, but clearly never did.

The part-owner of the ship, James H. Winchester, suggested that *Mary Celeste's* cargo of denatured alcohol gave off fumes, which collected in the hold and formed an explosive mixture. This, he speculated, was

in Keating's book was its title: the story *was* a hoax; Lee Kaye, Laurence Keating, and the *Evening Standard's* 'special correspondent' were all one and the same person, an Irish-Liverpuddlian named Laurence J. Keating. John Pemberton was a figment of Keating's fertile imagination and the photograph of 'Pemberton' was of Keating's own father.

While the majority of theories to explain the abandonment of *Mary Celeste* are generally a variation on the theme of murder – committed either by *Mary Celeste's* own crew or by the men of *Dei Gratia* – other solutions are not uncommon and are frequently bizarre. The 1900s favoured 'monster from the depths' stories in which *Mary Celeste* was attacked by a huge hungry octopus that plucked the entire crew from the deck. Although it has its attractions for illustrators, the theory also has a number of flaws. Even if such a huge creature exists (see page 90) it is highly unlikely that everyone aboard *Mary Celeste* would have been on deck at the same time or that they would have obligingly stayed there as the monster plucked them off one by one. We must also assume that for some reason it craved *Mary Celeste's* yawl, chronometer, sextant, and ship's papers.

The late Morris K. Jessup, who was involved with the alleged Philadelphia experiment (see page 309), suggested that *Mary Celeste's* crew were abducted by a UFO. And Bermuda Triangle writers list the

Above: the alleged suicide of the *Marie Celeste's* captain – 'Tibbs' – from an illustration of Conan Doyle's story *J. Habakuk Jephson's statement*. A gripping tale, it was taken by many to be true and popularised the misnomer '*Marie Celeste*'

Below: sea monsters have also been blamed for the tragedy





either ignited by a spark, resulting, perhaps, from friction caused by the metal bands around the barrels rubbing together, or a naked light used during cargo inspection. Or perhaps the fumes had been mistaken for smoke and gave rise to the belief that the ship was about to be blown out of the water.

Experts have expressed the opinion that there could have been no *visible* vapour, but that an explosive mixture could have been formed. However, this would not have resulted in a minor explosion, but would have blown *Mary Celeste* into matchwood.

The most likely solution was in part offered by Oliver Deveau at the salvage hearing. He said that he thought the crew had panicked, believing that the ship was sinking. It was not an opinion that has impressed many commentators and most have dismissed it as idiotic (and Deveau himself as an idiot). But in fairness to Deveau, his comment has to be taken in context. At the hearing he was asked a straightforward question, and he answered it without elaboration. Later researchers, however, have tried to interpret his meaning.

Above: a reconstruction of one theory about the disappearance of the crew of *Mary Celeste*: they all fell overboard. The influential *Strand Magazine* heard that a reputable schoolmaster had a servant named Abel Fosdyk who claimed to have been the only survivor. Fosdyk said that Captain Briggs went mad. This may or may not be connected with the 'fact' that everyone else on board was precipitated into the sea from a flimsy play area built for the captain's daughter. Fosdyk threw no light on why no one managed to climb back on board

Right: in the 1936 film version the bosun goes mad and kills the entire crew, including himself

Dr James H. Kimble, once the head of the United States Weather Bureau in New York, and author Gershom Bradford have both suggested that *Mary Celeste* was struck by a waterspout, a tornado at sea; a column of whirling wind and water that can appear without warning, last for up to an hour, and then break up as quickly as it appeared.

At first glance this theory does not seem very plausible, particularly as waterspouts are not common outside the tropics, nor is it common for ships to be struck by them. But the fact is that waterspouts are not totally restricted to the tropics: for example, in December 1920 the steamer *British Marquis* reported no less than 20 waterspouts in the English Channel.

Mr Bradford and Dr Kimble believe that a relatively small and harmless spout, narrow and travelling at an angle, could have struck the ship without doing a great deal of damage; indeed, it would have left the vessel no worse than had she encountered a storm. All this is consistent with the state of *Mary Celeste* when first sighted by the *Dei Gratia*. However, within a waterspout the barometric pressure is extremely low and, as the spout passed over the ship, the marked difference in pressure between the inside and outside of the ship could have caused the hatch covers to blow off – in the same way that a building's walls explode outward when struck by a tornado.

In this context, the method by which *Mary Celeste* was sounded may be extremely significant. This was done by dropping a rod down the pump well to measure the water in the hold, in much the same way as a motorist checks his oil with a dipstick. The drop in barometric pressure could have driven the bilge water up the pump-well, where a valve



would have prevented it from returning immediately to the hold. Although this would have been merely a temporary malfunction, the crew may not have realised it.

Suppose, then, that after the waterspout had moved on the crew were shaken and confused. Somebody went to sound the ship to see if she had suffered any underwater damage, and to his horror found that *Mary Celeste* had leaked 6 to 8 feet (2 to 2½ metres) of water in less than a minute – or so the seaman would have thought when he removed the sounding rod. Believing *Mary Celeste* to be sinking fast, Captain Briggs, perhaps panicking out of concern for his wife and daughter, gave the order to abandon ship. Perhaps this was what Oliver Deveau had meant by his cryptic statement. We shall never know, but the waterspout theory certainly seems to fit most of the reported circumstances and also explains the most baffling feature of the case: what monstrous happening threatened those aboard *Mary Celeste*, resulting in their hurried evacuation but still allowing them time in which to grab sextant, chronometer and ship's papers?

One commentator has called the case of *Mary Celeste* 'a detective-story writer's nightmare: the perfectly perplexing situation without any logical solution – a plot which can never be convincingly unravelled.'

On 16 May 1873 the *Daily Albion* of Liverpool reported that two rafts had been found by fishermen at Baudus, in Asturias, near Madrid, Spain. One of the rafts had a corpse lashed to it and was flying an American flag. The second raft bore five decomposing bodies. Curiously, the matter was not investigated, so no one will ever know who they were or what ship they belonged to. But could they have been from *Mary Celeste*?



A terrible risk

In late 1884 an ageing and rather unkempt *Mary Celeste* was bought by Gilman C. Parker and loaded with freight, which he insured for \$30,000. The vessel then sailed for Port-au-Prince, Haiti. But she never arrived. On 3 January 1885 *Mary Celeste* ran aground on the razor-sharp coral reef of Rochaelais Bank in the Gulf of Gonave, off the coast of Haiti.

Parker put in an insurance claim, but for some reason the insurance companies regarded it with deep suspicion and sent enquiry agents to investigate. They found that Parker had loaded the ship with rubbish – not the valuable cargo he had insured – had deliberately run *Mary Celeste* aground, unloaded the part of the cargo that he could sell, and then set *Mary Celeste* alight.

Parker was charged with barratry –

fraud and/or criminal negligence by a ship's officer or crew against the owners or insurers. In those days this was a crime punishable by death. The case was heard in a federal court in Boston, but it was dropped because of a legal technicality. Gilman C. Parker, a grizzled old sea-dog who was – judging by the evidence – undoubtedly guilty of every maritime crime short of piracy, and his associates walked from the court free men. Free, that is, from the penalties of a court of law, but not from the jinx of *Mary Celeste*. In a short time Parker went bankrupt, and he died in poverty and disrepute. One of his fellow conspirators went insane and was placed in a mental institution where he ended his days. Another killed himself. In the end the jinx of *Mary Celeste* had won, having horribly ruined many lives.

Above: a waterspout at sea. A fast, angled one could have hit the *Mary Celeste*, causing only superficial damage and temporarily falsifying the crew's soundings. Believing that they were sinking, the crew could have panicked and abandoned ship. Although this is one of the more reasonable theories, it is unlikely that anyone will ever discover the truth

Further reading

Paul Begg, *Into thin air*, Sphere 1981
Gershom Bradford, *The Secret of the Mary Celeste*, W. Foulsham & Co. 1966
Macdonald Hastings, *Mary Celeste*, Michael Joseph 1972

A logic of their own

ONE OF THE MOST curious categories in the UFO files consists of isolated reports of UFOs landing on rivers or lakes and siphoning up considerable quantities of water. We report on two cases, widely separated in both space and time: the first is from Japan in 1973, the second from northern Italy in 1952. In both instances, the amount of water taken on board by the UFOs suggests that it is not intended merely for scientific analysis – yet what else can it be used for? Are we to believe that UFOs are powered or cooled by water, or

Two terrifying incidents from Japan and one from Italy give some clues about UFO power. CHARLES BOWEN examines the evidence

that their occupants need water for drinking or cooking?

Our third case is one of the weirdest ever to have been reported in Japan. Although it must be classified as a close encounter of the third kind, no UFO was observed during the incident. If some alien entities can survive without spacecraft, why are others so apparently vulnerable that they require regular supplies of water? The reports simply do not add up to a coherent picture of the perplexing UFO phenomenon.

'Infinite menace'

Close encounter of the third kind: Tomakomai, Hokkaido, Japan, July 1973

In 1975 *Flying Saucer Review* received an exciting account of one of the occasional sightings of UFOs taking on water. It came from a Japanese UFO investigator, Jun-Ichi Takanashi of Osaka; shadowy humanoid beings were also said to have been observed. The event took place at Tomakomai, a small industrial town on the southern coast of Hokkaido, the northernmost island of Japan, in July 1973. The eyewitness was Masaaki Kudou, a university student, then aged 20. He was home on vacation, and had taken a temporary job as a night security guard at a timber yard.

After patrolling the premises in his car, Mr Kudou returned to the prescribed place from which he could observe the premises –

and the waters of the bay beyond – and settled back to listen to his radio, light a cigarette, and relax. It was a still night, with the stars clearly visible. Suddenly he saw a streak of light flash across the sky, a spectacular 'shooting star' that suddenly stopped in its tracks, vanished, and reappeared. Remaining stationary, the light now expanded and contracted alternately at high speed, growing until it reached the apparent size of a baseball held at arm's length. It darted about in all directions within a few degrees of arc, and Mr Kudou found himself dizzily trying to follow its gyrations. As it began to descend spirally towards the sea the young student felt a surge of alarm, especially when the light halted near a distant cement works, and began to direct a beam of intermittent pulses of green light towards the north. Next, the object continued its descent towards the sea, this time sweeping in an arc until it was in a position much closer to the student observer. It halted its descent at about 70 feet (20 metres) from the sea, and the student saw a transparent tube emerge and lower itself towards the water. A soft *min-min-min-min* noise could be heard as this was happening, and the pitch of the noise lowered as the tube descended. When the tube touched the water its lower edge glowed, and it seemed that water was being sucked up into the object above.

Masaaki Kudou wondered if he were dreaming or, failing that, if his imagination were playing tricks with him. He lowered his gaze for a minute or so; when he looked again the water-suction operation was over, and the tube had been withdrawn from the water. No sooner had he registered this fact than the hovering UFO began to move towards him with what seemed to be infinite menace; he feared he was about to be attacked, and probably killed.

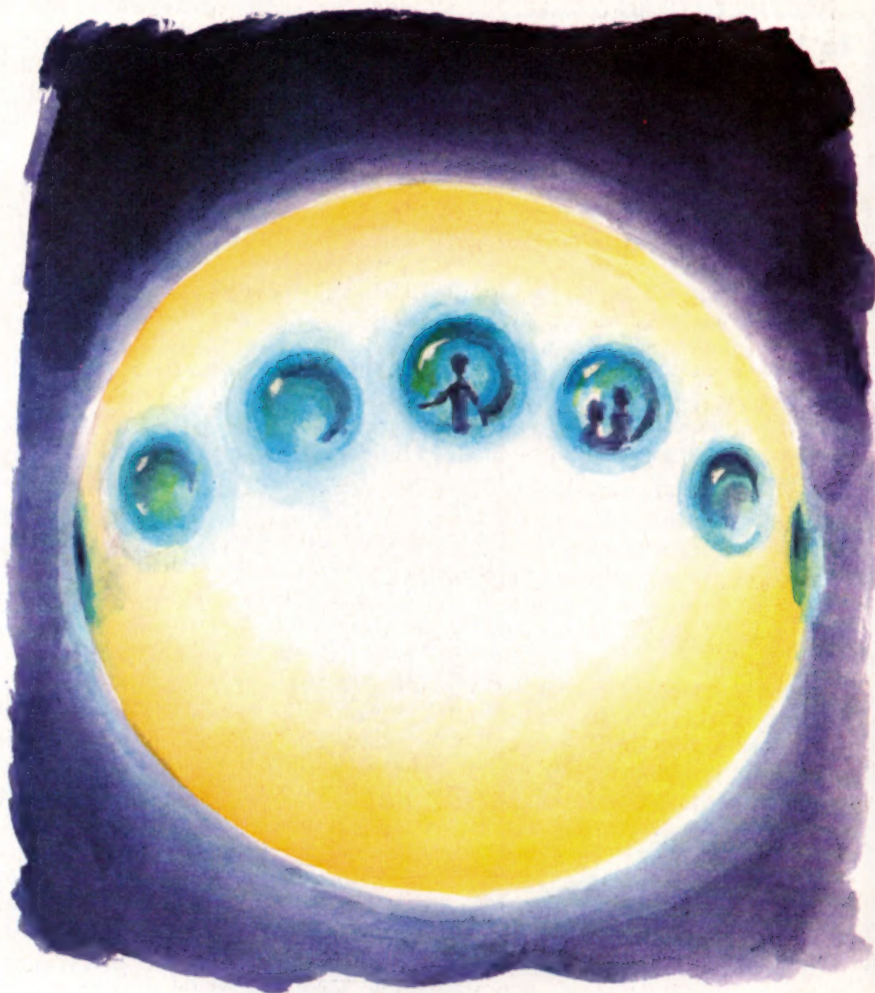
The object moved into a position some 160 feet (50 metres) above Kudou's car, and he, by leaning forwards and looking up, could keep it in view. He says its surface was as smooth as a table-tennis ball and, emitting



its own glow, appeared to be white. Around his car everything was lit up as though by daylight, and he says he saw what appeared to be windows around the diameter of the spherical object. In the middle of one of these there was a shadowy human-shaped figure, while to the right there were two smaller shapes in another of the windows, but Kudou could not see whether or not these were similar to the first. All this, plus a sudden feeling that he was bound hand and foot, was too much for the witness, who rocked his head in his hands, with his chin on the steering wheel, moaning to himself.

Nevertheless, he still felt an urge to look upwards and, straining to do this, Kudou saw in the sky above the car three or four newly arrived glowing objects, similar in all respects to the first one. There was also a large, dark brown object, in silhouette, which looked like 'three gasoline drums connected together lengthwise' and which hovered noiselessly.

Suddenly the whole phenomenal spectacle came to an end. The glowing spheres swiftly manoeuvred into position whence they disappeared into one end of the large 'gasoline can' objects, and this in turn shot off to the north rather like a shooting star. The witness sat motionless, numb all over. He slowly became aware that his car radio was giving forth meaningless sounds, and that he himself was suffering from a severe headache. He was later able to estimate that the terrifying incident had lasted for about 12 minutes in all.



'They want to do me harm'

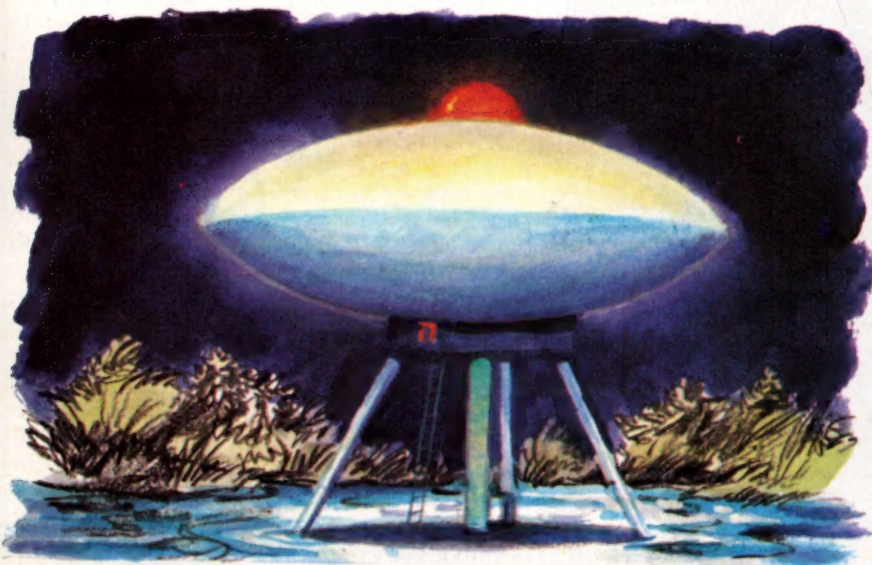
Close encounter of the third kind: Lucca, Italy, 25 July 1952

At 3 a.m. on 25 July 1952, a keen fisherman named Carlo Rossi was walking alongside the River Serchio, opposite San Pietro a Vico in Lucca, northern Italy, when he was puzzled by the appearance of an unusual light from an unseen position on the river below. Climbing the high embankment, he looked down to see a huge circular craft bearing a

transparent cupola on top, and a shallow turret underneath from which three legs protruded, supporting the body of the craft above the water. There was also a ladder, and a long tube by which, apparently, the craft was taking in water. Suddenly a port opened in the upper part of the turret, and Carlo saw a 'human' figure look out. This figure pointed at the fisherman, who scrambled down the embankment. A green ray passed over his head, and he threw himself down. Looking up, seconds later, he saw the craft rise above the embankment and move off at high speed towards Viareggio.

Rossi was badly shaken by the incident – but something that happened a few weeks later worried him much more. To the outsider, the incident seems trivial – although it is a classic example of an MIB encounter: a strange man approached Rossi and offered him, Rossi said, a 'bad' cigarette. Rossi was terrified; he used later to say, 'I wonder if they want to do me harm, maybe, because of the thing I saw in the river?'

The circumstances of Rossi's subsequent death seem to lend substance to his suspicion. He was riding home on his bicycle one day when he was knocked down by a car. The driver was never identified.



'Alarm turned to terror'

Close encounter of the third kind: Sayama City, Saitama Prefecture, Japan,
3 October 1978

Right: Mr Hideichi Amano, victim of the Sayama encounter, recounts his experience on the television programme 11 P.M.

Mr Hideichi Amano, who owns and runs a snack bar in Sayama City, Saitama Prefecture, Japan, is also a keen radio 'ham'. Jun-Ichi Takanashi investigated Mr Amano's alarming experience after seeing him on the television programme 11 P.M.

The encounter occurred on the evening of 3 October 1978, when Amano, using his mobile unit radio car, drove up a mountain outside Sayama City at about 8.30 p.m. with his two-year-old daughter Juri. He made the trip so that he could get unrestricted radio transmission and reception for a conversation with his brother, who lives in a distant part of the country. When their hook-up was finished, and a few other local calls had been made, Hideichi Amano was about to drive back down the mountain when the interior of the car became very bright, a light ten times brighter than was normal was coming from the fluorescent tube he had fitted inside the car. He observed that this light was confined to the car's interior; none, he said, was passing through the windows! Moments earlier Juri had been standing on the passenger seat beside him, but now her father was aghast to see the child lying on the seat, and foaming at the mouth. At the same instant he became aware of a round patch of orange light that was beamed through the windscreen and onto his stomach, and he saw that this was coming from a point in the sky. And then alarm turned to terror when he sensed something metallic being pressed against his right temple.

Hideichi Amano glanced sideways and saw an unearthly humanoid creature standing there with a pipe-like device in its mouth, and it was this that was being pressed against his head. From the tube came an incessant babble, as from a tape being played too fast.

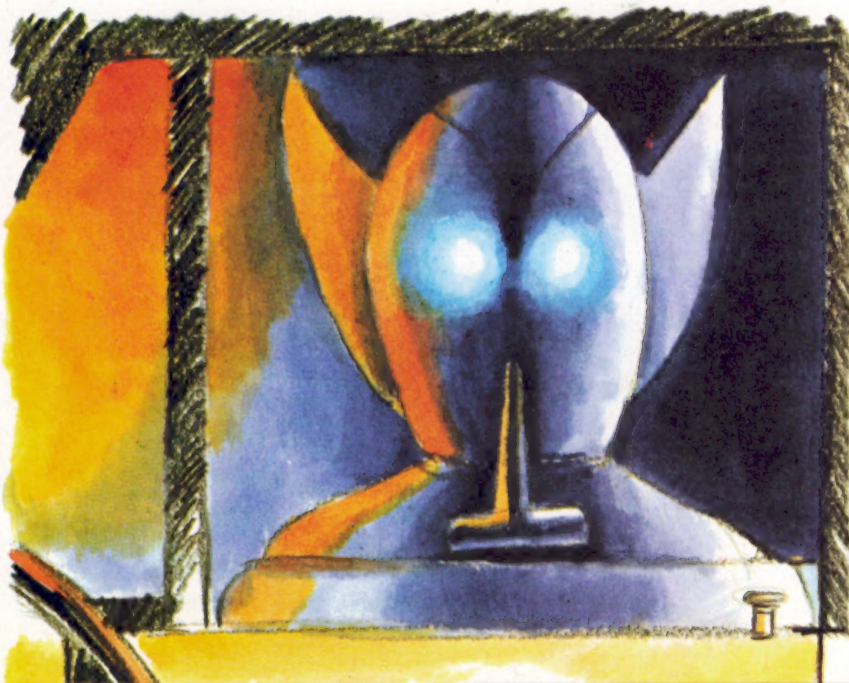
The witness said the creature had a round



face, but no neck, two sharply pointed ears, two small, motionless eyes that glowed bluish-white, and a triangular depression on its forehead. The mouth was clamped round the pipe, and no nose could be seen. While the babble continued Mr Amano says he found it difficult to move, and his mind became 'vague'. The terrified radio ham tried to start the car to flee the place, but there was no response from the engine, and the lights would not work, either. Then, after four or five minutes, the creature began to dim out and slowly vanished. The orange light disappeared, the interior lighting returned to normal, and other equipment that had been switched on now began to function. When the headlights returned Mr Amano switched the starter and got an instant response. Still in a confused state he roared away down the hill, and it was only when he reached the lower slopes that he remembered little Juri's condition. He stopped and, fortunately, the child stood up and said: 'I want a drink of water, papa.'

The witness decided to report the experience to the police, but they only poked fun at him, so he went home and retired to bed, still suffering a severe headache.

Researchers for the 11 P.M. programme heard of the affair and eventually arranged for Mr Amano to be questioned under hypnosis in front of the cameras. One piece of information retrieved was that the creature was alleged to have told him to return to the meeting place at a certain time - which, to avoid a stampede by the curious, was not revealed to the viewers. Jun-Ichi Takanashi seemed to have little faith in the regression session because the 'hypnotist's insistence on more information was far too severe'; he suspected that the idea of a second meeting with the humanoid was a creation of the witness's subconscious mind. The fact that no second meeting was ever reported seems to lend weight to this. Yet, despite his reservations, Takanashi considered the encounter, as originally reported, to be 'the strangest ever to have taken place in Japan.'



Post script

Your letters to
THE UNEXPLAINED

Dear Sir,

When I was 10 years old I had an awful nightmare, one that I can remember as plainly today as I did then.

I dreamed that I was with two other boys and we were making a 'den' in the ground on a construction site where a new bowling alley was being built. The hole had been partly dug for us already by the workmen but we were using spades to make it deeper. Then disaster struck. The earth caved in on us and I remember in my dream screaming for help, though I was choking on the soft mud. Everything was black and damp. I was struggling for my life, managing to break the surface with one hand. Then my mother woke me up and calmed me, while I told her everything about my dream.

On the following day the real thing happened – not to me but to three other boys who were digging a den on a site that was going to become a bowling alley. Those three boys died when the earth caved in on them – and one of the boys was found with his hand protruding from the ground.

Ten years after that incident we moved house, and discovered that our next door neighbour had lost his grandson in that very tragedy. Could this be a 'mere' coincidence?

But an even stranger experience was to come: a friend and I went to Southsea seafront one evening to play in the amusement arcade. We stayed there from about 8 p.m. to around midnight, but when I arrived home my mother said, 'That was quick – you've only been gone a minute!' 'What do you mean,' I retorted, 'I've been out for four hours.' But she stared at me in amazement and told me that 'I' had been back from Southsea for over an hour and had even taken the dog for a walk. 'I' had, apparently, walked into our kitchen, spoken quite naturally to her and even sat down to eat my supper. Shortly afterwards 'I' had decided to take the dog for a walk and had just gone out when the real me walked in. Could it be that as my double walked out it re-entered my body as it stood on the doorstep?

Our family had another psychic experience; it happened when we had been living in our council house for 10 years. One night when I was in bed I felt what seemed like a hand grabbing my leg. It seemed to squeeze tight for about a minute before finally letting go. At the time I just dismissed it as a dream and thought no more of it. But the following night I felt as if some invisible person were trying to strangle me. I felt petrified – it seemed so unreal. The hands let go of my throat eventually. I decided not to tell the rest of my family because I didn't want to scare them.

But it kept happening and in the end I felt I had to tell my parents about it. Then my mother said she had been experiencing weird 'cold spots' in the house. The last straw came when my mother saw a little girl holding a doll at the foot of her bed. Unknown to me at the time, my mother went to see a medium who came to the house and twirled some beads around, saying she could 'feel a presence'. She told my mother it was the spirit of a little girl who had died of asthma. She then pointed to a cabinet that my mother had bought from a second-hand furniture dealer, saying that the little girl couldn't be sent to the 'other side' because

that used to be her toy cupboard and this was the link holding her spirit on earth. The medium said that this little girl's soul used to put her arms around my neck because she wanted to be cuddled. She told my mother to burn the cabinet so that the little girl's spirit could be released from its earthly ties. And after we destroyed the cabinet we had no more experience of spirits in our house.

All of these stories are true: I have not added anything and have tried to make the facts as unsensational as possible.

Yours faithfully,
Roy Johnson

Havant, Hants

Dear Sir,

After reading Mrs D. Parish's letter in issue 10 of *The Unexplained*, I remembered having a similar dream.

One night when I was about 10 I had a brief dream about falling off a large boat and being cut to shreds by a huge propeller. A week later I had essentially the same dream, but this time it was more vivid and detailed.

One evening my father announced that we were going on a boating holiday on a canal in the Brecon Beacons (a Welsh beauty spot). Then that evening I had the dream again; it was very clear and short. I had no further dreams of that nature – until the day we went on holiday. On the first night afloat I had the same dream.

Next day we came to a large lock. As the boat entered it one of my brothers let go of one of the ropes. Afraid of it being caught up in the propeller I seized the rope, falling into the water as I did so and being dragged through it as the boat went further and further into the lock. Just as the gates were closing I released the rope. A second longer and I would have been crushed between the lock gates.

I believe this incident had a direct connection with my dreams. I also believe that dreams can be like time transporters that can take your mind into the future or back into the past.

Yours faithfully,
M. James

Swansea, Wales

Dear Sir,

Let me first of all say how much I enjoy your magazine and the high quality of the articles.

I was therefore extremely surprised to see the figures quoted for the density of the Earth and the Moon (issue 36, page 720). The average density of the Earth is 340 pounds per cubic foot (5520 kilograms per cubic metre), and that of the Moon is 210 pounds per cubic foot (3340 kilograms per cubic metre). All the figures quoted on page 720 are, in fact, a million times too small, both in pounds per cubic foot and kilograms.

Yours faithfully,
A.S. Davenport

Salford, Manchester

We are grateful to Mr Davenport, and to Mr Newsome of Ossett, West Yorkshire, from whom we received a similar letter, for pointing out this error. It only remains for us to add the correct value for the density of the Moon's surface rocks; this is 190 pounds per cubic foot (2960 kilograms per cubic metre).



THE WORLD'S MYSTERIOUS PLACES – 19
The standing stones at Stenness, Orkney